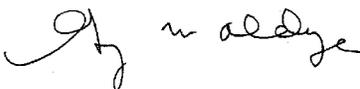


For: FSA and FAS Employees

**Using Government-Provided American Express (AMEX) Charge
Cards to Pay for Domestic Transportation Tickets**

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Overview

A

Background

Because of the expense of reconciling and paying American Express centrally billed transportation accounts, the Office of the Chief Financial Officer (OCFO) has taken steps to:

- close all centrally-billed accounts
- use individual government-provided AMEX charge cards to pay for **domestic** transportation tickets.

FSA and FAS were granted partial exceptions to this change provided that controls would be implemented to ensure that GVTS account use is severely restricted.

B

Foreign Travel

Foreign transportation tickets are **exempt** from the provisions in this notice. All foreign travel transportation will continue to be charged to the centrally billed accounts. Follow existing procedures for purchasing tickets for foreign transportation.

Continued on the next page

<p>Disposal Date</p> <p>June 1, 1999</p>	<p>Distribution</p> <p>All FSA and FAS Employees except Overseas; State Office relay to County Offices</p>
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1 Overview (Continued)

C

Purpose

This notice:

- announces that OCFO has directed FSA and FAS to reduce the use of centrally billed accounts for payment for transportation tickets (GVTS)
 - instructs employees to charge **domestic** transportation tickets to individual AMEX government-provided charge cards.
-

D

Travel Guide

Additional travel information and other provisions are set forth in the Travel Management - FSA/FAS Desk Reference Guide.

An electronic copy of the Guide may be requested by **emailing the following:**
POC_Travel@wdc.fsa.uds.gov.

Note: In the GroupWise address book "Travel" is the last name, and POC is the first name.

The subject for the message must be "travel_desktop_reference". Do not include the quotation marks. If the subject is incorrect you will receive the message, "INVALID REQUEST - No information available for the requested subject."

Hard copies of the Guide were distributed to each office in July 1997.

Notice FI-2290

2 USDA's AMEX Contract

A **USDA/AMEX** **Policies**

USDA policy and the contractual terms between AMEX and USDA provide that:

- the AMEX transaction date for billing airline tickets is the day before the date the ticket is available for pickup

Note: AMEX must issue (bill) tickets and bundle the tickets for delivery to the South Building 2 days before the departure date.

- tickets will be issued and available for pickup 2 days before the departure date
- a traveler may request that the ticket be available prior to 2 days before departure

Note: The ticket will be issued and billed on the date that the traveler requested the ticket be available.

- there is no interest on government-provided AMEX accounts
 - the AMEX billing cycle is every 30 days and accounts are:
 - current when paid within 30 days of billing.
 - delinquent when not paid within 60 days of billing
 - seriously delinquent when not paid within 90 days of initial billing and the card may be suspended
 - subject to cancellation and reporting to credit bureaus as past due accounts if not paid within 120 days of the first billing cycle.
-

B **Timeliness**

All travel documents shall be prepared, submitted, and processed in a timely manner. Employees on extended travel status should submit vouchers monthly to ensure prompt repayment.

Continued on the next page

2 USDA's AMEX Contract (Continued)

**C
Acquiring An
AMEX Card**

To ensure that an AMEX card is received before travel begins, employees shall:

- with supervisory approval, contact the appropriate office according to subparagraph D for an application
 - complete and submit the application for processing no less than 14 business days before travel begins.
-

3 Ordering Transportation Tickets

**A
Ordering
Domestic
Transportation
Tickets**

Employees shall:

- continue using their current method for ordering transportation tickets
- charge domestic transportation tickets to government-provided AMEX cards.

Note: See subparagraph 2 C for information about acquiring an AMEX card.

Employees who do not wish to obtain an AMEX card, or who were issued a government-provided AMEX card but no longer have it, shall follow subparagraph B to obtain transportation tickets.

**B
Ordering
Domestic
Transportation
Tickets Without
An AMEX Card**

National Office employees scheduled for domestic travel, who do not have government-provided AMEX cards, must have their immediate supervisor provide a fax statement requesting approval to use the GVTS account to procure tickets to the appropriate Travel/Administrative Office, according to subparagraph D.

The fax statement must include the:

- employee's name
- employee's Social Security number
- dates of travel
- location traveling to and from
- reason the employee is not using a government-provided AMEX card.

Note: A fax request will be required each time the employee travels.

Continued on the next page

Notice FI-2290

3 Ordering Transportation Tickets (Continued)

**C
Ordering
Foreign
Transportation
Tickets**

Follow existing procedures for purchasing foreign transportation tickets.

**D
Contacts**

Direct questions about this notice according to the following table.

Location/Service	Contact
FAS Offices - Transportation Tickets	MSD, International Services Branch, at 202-720-7815 or fax at 202-720-9986
FSA National Offices - Transportation Tickets	FMD, Accounting and Travel Policy Section (ATPS), at 703-305-1408 or fax at 703-305-1147
FAS Offices - AMEX Card	FMD, International Accounting Branch at 703-305-1424
FSA National Offices - AMEX Card	FMD, ATPS at 703-305-1408
KCMO	Wendy Collins, KCMO, at 816-926-3266
St. Louis Complex	
State Offices	
County Offices	State Office
